

Kentucky Census Records

Kentucky Population Schedules:

1790 *Reconstructed, originals destroyed
1800 *Reconstructed, originals destroyed
1810
1820
1830
1840
1850
1860
1870
1880
1890 *Destroyed
1900
1910
1920
1930
1940
1950

Non-Population Schedules:

Agricultural
1850 / 1860 / 1870 / 1880
Manufacturing
1820 / 1850 / 1860 / 1870 / 1880
Mortality
1850 / 1860 / 1870 / 1880
Slave
1850 / 1860
Indian
1835
Pensioners
1840
Defective, Dependent, and Delinquents /
(Social Statistics)
1880

Background

Federal population schedules (census) have been taken every 10 years since 1790. While Kentucky did not achieve statehood until 1792, it was included in the 1790 Census. Over time the Census has recorded an evolving array of personal information about the state's residents, including things like name, address, gender, race, age, marital status, relationship to family members, citizenship information, languages, and even health information. Each census is different in the data it collects. Listed below are some examples of how each has differed:

- **1790 / 1800:** Originals were destroyed during the War of 1812. Reconstructed from tax lists, they include the name of the taxpayer and the county of residence.
- **1810 / 1820 / 1830 / 1840:** Household head named, all other residents numbered by age; sex; race; and slaves. 1840 saw the addition of a few other categories, most notably tracking Revolutionary war service.
- **1850 / 1860:** Includes names of all household members along with their age, gender, occupation, and birthplace.
- **1870:** First attempt to list everyone in the population. Introduces categories to document parental heritage if foreign-born.

- **1880:** Introduces the inclusion of addresses, marital status, and familial relationships.
- **1890:** Destroyed. Listing of Union veterans of the Civil War and their widows.
- **1900:** Began tracking the number of children each woman had given birth to, how many survived, and citizenship status and year of arrival for non-native-born citizens.
- **1910:** Recorded Civil War veterans.
- **1920:** Year of naturalization, and the native language of the individual and their parents.
- **1930:** Includes age at first marriage and tracking of military service.
- **1940:** Only schedule to track who provided the information to the census-taker, as well as where people had lived five years previously.

Non-population schedules or special censuses were also taken to identify and quantify various resources and needs. These included:

- **Agricultural:** documented the name of the owner of a farm, acreage, livestock and breeds, agricultural goods produced in the year, value of the farm, and its inventory.
- **Manufacturing:** included the name of the manufacturer, type of business or product, amount invested, raw materials used, value of the product produced annually, power and machinery used, number of people employed, and average monthly cost of labor.
- **Mortality:** recorded deaths in the year preceding the taking of the census. Records note name, age, sex, marital status, place of birth, month of death, occupation, cause of death, and length of illness.
- **Slave:** listing of slave owners with the age, gender, and color data of the slaves.
- **Indian:** Prior to their removal from traditional homeland territories, the Cherokee population east of the Mississippi River was documented in this census. Primarily consists of Cherokee residents of Tennessee, Alabama, North Carolina, and Georgia.
- **Pensioners:** census of pensioners for revolutionary or military service, with names, ages, and places of residence.
- **Defective / Social Statistics:** a collection of names, their residences, treatment details, and condition notes of people identified as idiots, deaf-mutes, blind, homeless children, prisoners, and paupers.

Access

Census records are valuable for the direct information given on each individual as well as the indirect information that can be inferred from them. They are also easily accessible online on either FamilySearch or Ancestry (*Except where otherwise indicated*). KDLA maintains copies of Census records on microfilm as well, which are available for use in the KDLA Research Room. For remote access, or to place an order for records from this collection refer to our website at kdla.ky.gov.

Other Sources

Refer to the United States Census Bureau for more detailed information when conducting census research. Both Ancestry and FamilySearch also have exhaustive documentation on the records and methods of search within them.